

BETHLEHEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FINANCIAL ADVISOR

**DUE: FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025
4:00 p.m.**

**JOHN P. MCPHILLIPS, JR.
CHIEF BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL OFFICER
700 DELAWARE AVENUE
DELMAR, NEW YORK 12054
Phone - (518) 439-7481
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John P. McPhillips, Jr.
Chief Business and Financial Officer
jmcpillips@bethlehemschools.org

Business Office
700 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054
(518) 439-7481, ext.1920



The Bethlehem Central School District is requesting proposals for the services of a Financial Advisor as described in the attached Request for Proposal (RFP).

Qualified organizations are invited to submit two (2) copies of a proposal as described within the RFP. Proposals are to be addressed to John P. McPhillips, Jr., Chief Business and Financial Officer, Bethlehem Central School District, 700 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054.

Proposals must be received no later than 4:00 p.m., Friday, March 28, 2025.

Proposals will be reviewed, and those firms whose proposals most appropriately meet the District's needs will be considered.

Thank you for your interest.

John P. McPhillips, Jr.

BETHLEHEM CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
Request for Proposal
for a Financial Advisor

General Information

The District provides a full range of educational services from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The District is located primarily within the Town of Bethlehem and borders on the City of Albany in the Capital Region of New York. The majority of the District is residential in nature, but there is a moderate commercial tax base consisting of office complexes and shopping centers.

Student population:	4,114
Approved 2024-25 Budget:	\$114,037,534
Fiscal year:	July 1 through June 30

The District is governed by their Board of Education, which consists of seven members. The Central Administration is comprised of the Superintendent of Schools, the Deputy Superintendent, the Director of Student Support Services, the Chief Business & Financial Officer, and the Chief Technology Officer. More detailed information on the District and its finances may be obtained by reviewing the District’s website at www.bethlehemschools.org. A complete copy of the June 30, 2024 Financial Statement is available under the Finance detail of the Budget and Finance section, under “Financial Documents”.

Scope of Services

The District expects that the financial advisor will serve as our consultant on debt financing projects, will provide independent financial advice and serve solely the interests of the District, and will manage the bond financing process and negotiate key business points to accomplish the District’s objectives. The financial advisor is also expected to be thoroughly familiar with the requirements of the New York State Education Department’s (NYSED) Building Aid Unit, and may also assist with the tracking and reporting of project costs through NYSED in order to maximize the District’s receipt of building aid.

Period of Engagement:

The District seeks a firm price quote for a 3-year engagement period commencing July 1, 2025 with the option to extend up to two additional years. In the event either party wishes to discontinue the financial services during the term, written notice by March 31st is required, unless otherwise mutually agreed.

Services to be Provided

The District seeks to utilize the best combination of options available to adequately address the capital needs of the District. The selected Financial Advisor will be required to perform the following:

1. Propose financing methods to be considered for accomplishing the District's objectives. This will be done in conjunction with the District's staff and legal counsel.
2. Analyze and report on the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed financing.
3. Work with the District's bond counsel and financing team in recommending size, structure, specific terms and conditions for debt issues. Present information regarding methods of sale, including publicly offered and privately negotiated options (if deemed appropriate).
4. Assist the District in selection of the financing team, including the underwriter, trustee, verification agent and other professionals, and coordinate the activities of the team to complete the transaction.
5. Advise the District's financing team on areas of industry specific knowledge that affects the financing and marketing of the project's debt.
6. Working in conjunction with bond counsel, prepare the draft official statement, including a description of the securities, the project, and pertinent financial and economic data. In the preparation of such an official statement, assist the District in ascertaining material facts and circumstances regarding the project. The official statement will be printed and mailed, together with copies of the official notice of sale and basic legal documents, to a comprehensive list of prospective bidders.
7. Assist the District in making presentations to bond insurance companies and/or rating agencies. These agencies may require sufficient information to receive the highest possible rating on any securities prior to the sale of such securities.
8. Prior to the sale of securities, assist in representing the District at information meetings, if such meetings are necessary or desirable.
9. Assist in negotiations with bond insurers and/or letter of credit providers.
10. Manage competitive or negotiated sale process. Arrange for advertising and pre-marketing of issue. Represent the District at the bid opening for a public sale

and analyze the bids, identify the most favorable bid, and make a recommendation as to award of the bid. Act as the District's agent if bid negotiations are required. After the bid is awarded, prepare an actual debt service table based on accepted rates. In the event of a negotiated offering, assist the District in negotiating appropriate terms, reviewing spreads, comparing deals, analyzing market levels, and clarifying syndicate roles with selected underwriter.

11. Assist the District in closing the financing, and in advising the District on the investment of proceeds pending expenditure.

12. Prepare and deliver presentations designed to facilitate an understanding of public sector financing and its implications to the Board of Education, as may be necessary.

13. Analyze the financing impact of project costs, cash flow projections and rate implications. Participate in the development of alternate strategies with the District's financing team.

14. Assist the District in maintaining compliance with continuing disclosure requirements and possibly arbitrage compliance.

15. Assist the District in potential future capital project planning. Future capital projects inclusive of budget, scope, and timetables are presently under consideration and development.

Additionally, the District seeks the following services relative to required filings with the New York State Education Department:

1. Review of cost records and reconciliations prepared by the District, to assist with overall project management, and to ensure that the entire project is completed in accordance with the approved budgetary authorizations.

2. Successful firm must demonstrate knowledge of all required New York State Education Department Office of Facilities Planning and Building Aid Unit requirements. Assistance will be provided with preparation of all required forms submissions in order to maximize attainment of state aid.

Proposal Requirements

Scope of Services

The consultant shall provide a clear, concise response to the scope of service requirements set forth above. In the event of joint proposals between two or more firms, indicate the role that each sub-consultant or co-proposer would perform. The District reserves the right to select or choose between co-proposers and sub-consultants.

Qualifications

The consultant shall identify the financing team and any other key personnel involved in this project, including sub-consultants and co-proposers. The people identified as this team will be the ones allowed to participate in an interview, in the event the team is invited to an interview. Changes in members of the team will require advance approval by the District.

You must include a brief resume for each person, listing specific qualifications, including applicable experience in similar dollar volume and type of projects for school districts.

References

Consultant shall include the name, address and telephone number of at least five clients for whom services similar to those described in this Request for Proposal have been performed. In addition, the consultant shall provide an official statement from a similar financing done within the last five years.

Disclosure

The Consultant will disclose any professional or personal financial interests which could be a possible conflict of interest in representing the District. Consultant shall further disclose arrangements to derive additional compensation from various investment and reinvestment products, including financial contracts. The Consultant is prohibited from engaging in any activity on behalf of the District that will produce a direct or indirect financial gain for the Consultant, other than the agreed-upon compensation, without the District's written, informed consent.

Fee

The Consultant will prepare a total fee statement for the proposed financing as discussed in the RFP. Fees stated are to cover the services noted over the course of the term of the agreement inclusive of capital project(s) development.

Although it is likely that the District's financing will be a competitive sale, if the Consultant desires an alternate fee proposal for a negotiated sale, they should provide appropriate information as necessary.

Separate fee quotes should be provided for assistance with State Education Department submissions, as well as for continuing disclosure requirements and arbitrage compliance. Contingent fee proposals will not be considered by the District.

Proposal Submission

Two (2) copies of the completed proposal must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m., Friday, March 28, 2025 to:

John P. McPhillips, Jr., Chief Business and Financial Officer
Bethlehem Central School District
700 Delaware Avenue
Delmar, NY 12054

Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated based upon, but not limited to, related experience of the respondents, knowledge of the District, professional qualifications of individuals to be assigned to the project, creative financing strategies, fees, and overall proposal content.

Proposals will be reviewed by the District. Oral interviews of the most responsive firms may be scheduled shortly after the deadline submission date and may be conducted by phone at the option of the District. All Financial Advisors selected for interviews will be notified of the selection as soon as possible. It is anticipated that interviews will be held the week of April 7th. It is anticipated that the Board of Education will consider recommendations of a contract award in April 2025.

The District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in any proposal reviewed. Further, the District may reject any proposal which does not conform to the instructions herewith. Additionally, the District reserves the right to negotiate all final terms and conditions of any agreement entered into.

Nothing in the Request for Proposals shall be deemed to commit the District to engage any Financial Advisor.

Limitations

The Financial Advisor (FA) shall not be permitted to participate directly or indirectly in any manner in the purchase of any financing debt or bonds relating to any phase of the project for which FA services are provided.

Should you have any questions, please contact John P. McPhillips, Jr. at (518) 439-7481 ext. 1920, or email at jmcphillips@bethlehemschools.org.